THE IMPOSTVRES OF Seducing Teachers Discovered;

In a SERMON before the Right Honourable the LORD MAJOR and Court of ALDERMEN of the City of *London*, at their Anniversary meeting on Tuesday in Easter week, *April* 23, 1644. at *Christ-Church*.

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The second Edition.

2 TIM. 2. 17.
And their word will eat as doth a Gangrene.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
LORD MAJOR
AND
COURT OF ALDERMEN,
of the Famous City of
LONDON.

Right Honourable and Right Worſhipfull,

AN Epiſtle Dedicatory uſually beſpeakes a Patron, and then the Reader is epiſtled afterward. I intreat Readers only and Patrons no further then the Truth may challenge them ſuo jure. *Though I ſhould have done my ſelf but right in ſending this Sermon forth into publike, yet your Commands were the ſtronger tye upon me. It was received with ill reſentment by ſome whoſe Character not I but the*

Apostles gives in this Text: the aspect whereof is (I believe) no more pleasing then the Sermon; Either they should not wear such faces as are afraid of this glasse, or wash first, and then they will not be angry. I should rejoyce to offend any man for his good, and be afraid to please him for his hurt; I intended it for a stay to the mutant and unstable; a stop to that Gangrene which I hope is not crept so neer the Head as to have taken any of you; who in other things have been so far from being Children *tossed to and fro, with windes, stormy winds, that from you posterity shall learn to be* men. *The very holding up of the Text in open view may be a* quo vadis? *to one or other, If not. Yet* Thou hast delivered thy soul, *Ezek. 3. 19, 21. is some comfort to him who humbly presents this Sermon to your hands and eyes, with some enlargements here and there, which the time denyed to your eares; and whose honour it is to be*

Your Servant for Christ,

RICHARD VINES.

THE IMPOSTVRES OF Seducing Teachers Diſcovered;

EPHES. IV. XIV, XV.

That we henceforth be no more children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſleight of men, and *cunning craftineſſe, whereby they lye in wait to deceive.*

But ſpeaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the Head, even *Chriſt.*

THE Goſpel had no ſooner aſcended the Horizon of the Gentiles, and diſpel'd that univerſall ſhade wherein they had been benighted, but the Devill erected his factories in thoſe new diſcoveries to intercept the trade

of truth, therefore is our Apostle in many of his Epistles, so much in fortifying beleevers against the impressions of seducing teachers, and the hystorie of [a] *Luthers* time doth witnesse also that it is the lot of reformations while they are green and recent, to be infested with such sects and doctrines as haply were never before heard of; and therefore it concernes all to be careful what money they take when the markets are so full of adulterate coyn, and to be armed against the scandal thence arising, as if the truth was the mother of such monsters which are none of hers, but are laid at her door to bring her into discredit; we must expect no lesse, nay haply we have hereby an argument that the truth is at the threshold, for it is not ordinary that tares grow any where but in the wheate field. The Text too fitly serves our own Meridian, being purposely chosen to give antidote against the infection of seducing teachers.

a *Fatemur quidem novas quasdam & antea non auditas sectas, Anabaptistas Libertinos, Mennonios, Zwenkfeldianos statim ad exortum Evangelii extitisse*, Juel *Apol. Eccle. Anglicanæ. Vide* Sleidanum *in commentariis.*

Whether the word *Henceforth* do look back to the time past, and imply that the *Ephesians* had been like children tossed to and fro, as is generally conceived by the [b] Greek expositors and others, I shall neither enquire nor insist upon it, but shall take it as a result from what the Apostle had said in the beginning of the chapter, where having in the 4, 5, 6, verses, named seven *ones*, *one body and one spirit*, *one hope of your calling*, *one Lord*, *one faith*, *one baptisme*, *one God and Father of all*, wherein the *Ephesians* and all beleevers are concenterated. He passeth on and toucheth upon gifts and ministeries given to the Church by Jesus Christ, sitting at the right-hand of God; in which form of expression he seemes to allude to the

b ἔδειξε καὶ πάλαι τοῦτο πε πονθότας. Chrisost. Theophilact. Oecumenius. &c.

the [c] *Romans* in their tryumphs, wherein the Conquerour having the glorious Captaines at his chariot, scattered his munificence in congiaries and donatives to the souldiery and people, for so our Saviour *ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men:* and what are those gifts which might become the magnificence of a Conquerour so triumphant? Are they not ministeries? ver. 11. *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastours and Teachers,* a royall donative given in the day of his triumph: but the use and end whereunto these ministeries are subservient and instrumentall addes value to them, as it is set forth, ver. 12.13.14.15. *For the perfecting of the Saints,* &c. *That we henceforth be no more children.*

[c] As he doth elsewhere, *viz. Luk.* 2. 1<. and to the Olympick exercises, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. 25. &c. *& alibi.*

In the next you have { A Character, and An Antidote.

The character is of 2. sorts of persons { The Seduced, The Seducer;

The Seduced are called *children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.*

The Seducers are said to be sleighty, crafty, and to have their artifices, methods, stratagems of deceiving, *by the sleight of men and cunning craftinesse, whereby they lye in wait to deceive.*

The Antidote or preservative is two fold;

1. The Ministery which Christ hath given to his Church, *He gave some Apostles,* &c. That henceforth we be no more children, *&c.* for the salt (*ye are* saith Christ, *the salt of the earth*) serves to preserve the people from being flye-blown with every

corrupt doctrine unto putrefaction.

2. The holding faſt of the ſubſtance and vitals of practick godlineſs, ver. 15. *Following the truth in love, grow up in all things into him which is the Head* even *Chriſt*. The fortifying of the vitalls is a repercuſſive to all infections from the ſtinking breath of a corrupt teacher.

I ſhall open each part of the Text as I come to it, And firſt the character or deſcription of the Seduced, or of them that are unſtable; for there is no doubt but the Apoſtle intends to deſcypher inſtability and fluctuancy by theſe words, *Children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*; which is a ſentence (as every eye may ſee) carried on in metaphors and figurative expreſſions, only ſome criticks might haply ask what decorum of ſpeech there is in children toſſed to and fro and carried about with winds? For had it not been more congruity to have ſaid *waves* toſſed to and fro, or *clouds* carried about, then *children*? But we muſt not teach the Spirit of God to ſpeak, the ſence is obvious and proper; for the better rendering whereof we may conſider;

1. By what name unſtable people are called, *children*.

2. How their inſtability is expreſſed, *Toſſed to and fro and carried about*.

3. What cauſe there is of it, *Every wind of doctrine*.

[d] παιδία & νήπιοι are ſynonymies, 1 *Cor.* 14. 20. with Heb. 5. 13. *& alibi*.

1. For the firſt, They are *children* [d], ſo called, not in reſpect of age, but of knowledge and underſtanding, 1 *Cor.* 14. 20. be not children ταῖς φρεσὶν in underſtanding

standing, but be men: Where τέλειοι perfect and ripe men of knowledge are opposed to children, that is, ungrounded and unskilful ones, *unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe*, Heb. 5. 13. Such babes the Apostle calls *carnall*, though they be in Christ, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1,2,3. and opposeth them to *spiritual*, that is, perfect or ripe of knowledge and judgement; and you may see that such men, that are shallow and unballast with knowledge, are easily carried into envying, strife, factions, one crying up *Paul*, another *Apollo*, *ver.* 4. yea they become the certain prey of Sectaries and Seducers, made prize of by them, as the [e] word signifies, *Col.* 2. 8.

And so נְעָרִים & פְּתָיִם *in veteri Testamento.* Isa. 3. 4. Prov. 19. 25. Eccles. 10. 18. *& alibi.*

[e] συλαγωγῶν, Col. 2. 8.

2. For the second, their instability is expressed in two [f] metaphors, *tossed to and fro, and carried about*; the former is drawn from a wave of the sea (for κλύδων is a wave) and so it denotes an uncertain man that fluctuates in opinion, and is explained to the full, *James* 1. 6. *a wavering man is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed.* The latter from a light cloud swimming in the ayre, carried about in a circle having no weight in it, and may well be expounded by that of *Jude* ver. 12. *clouds without water carried about.* Nor wave nor cloud have any consistence, but are alwayes in motion if any wind be stirring, you shall in vain look to find them anon where you see them now.

[f] κλυδωνιζόμενοι περιφερόμενοι.

3. For the third, the cause of this instability is *every wind of doctrine*, there are winds of persecution that overthrow the house upon the sand, and there are winds of doctrine that tosse to and fro these children. Scripture mentions chaffe and stubble driven

with wind, the reed shaken with the wind, the wave, the cloud tossed and carried by the wind. It is because we have no weight in our selves, nor solid principles, that the wind hath power over us; they are light things and moveable, that are at the command of every wind: when the Apostle saith *wind of doctrine*, he implies that there is no solidity; and when he saith *every wind*, he implies that there may be contrariety in those doctrins to one another, and yet every one tosses some waves to and fro, and carries some clouds about, nay the very same cloud that is now carried one way, is anon carried another; and what a miserable passe is he at, whose Religion consists in some empty opinion, and is but thereof tenant at curtesie to the next wind that blowes, being carried about with every change or novelty of doctrine. There are others that are unstable, not for want of principles and knowledge, but rather want of a good byas of sincerity for God, being carried about too, but it is by their Interests and ends, whereby they are off and on, up and down, as the sent lies, and as the game which they hunt doth lead them, with these I have not much to do at this time.

g *Heinsius exercit in locum: doctrina indies mutabilis.*

Having thus opened the words of the first part, I shall now sum them up together into this point.

Doct. *Children* (that is, ungrounded people who have no sound bottome of knowledge) *are apt to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.*

1. *Children*, is a word denoting relation or imperfection; Relation, and so *ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ*, Gal. 3.26. Imperfection, so in that

that of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. *When I was a child I spake as a child, &c.* There are many of this denomination in the Church, for as in a School there are divers formes, and commonly the most Schollers are in the lower, so is it in the Church of God, there are abcedaries, babes that are to be taught to spell their letters, *Heb.* 5. 13. the first elements of the oracles of God, and to be fed with the spoon, or as the Apostle calls it, *milk*, He did not think himself too high to feed with *milk*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. Therefore let no Minister be he never so learned, scorn to be an Usher under Christ, to teach his perties their *a, b, c.* If the people had not pleaded their rotten charters of age and marriage against Catechisme, and the Minister had not thought himself too good to teach them their letters and first elements, we had not seen so many children carried about with winds of doctrine. Pride (I fear) hath made both ashamed of the duty, the one to teach, the other to be taught, and I would that both were now humble enough to acknowledge the fruit of that neglect.

Now children are so called, by reason of the imperfection of their knowledge, either in respect of the measure of it, or of their ungroundednesse in it, and its lying loose in them without rooting.

1. In respect of the measure of knowledge, which is low and meane, though themselves be stedfast in it and unshaken: It is not a swimming but an anchoring and centering knowledge, and stakes them down from fluctuancy and tossing, and this is, by having the savour, virtue and sweetnesse of that they know: He that hath a little knowledg well tryed

by

by the touchstone of the word, and tryed in his own experience to be humbling, quickning and comforting, he loves the truth, and love will establish him in it; upon that reason which *Peter* gave to Christ, Joh. 6. 68. *Whither should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* The Apostles while under Christs own ministery and wing were but very raw in knowledge, (and thereby we learn that no doctrinall teaching or ministery, though of Christ himself on earth, can make way into the heart of man until the Spirit come,) yet so much they found in the words of Christ that they knew not whether else to go, because eternal life was in them; and this testimony our people cannot but give to our deserted Ministers, that the words of eternal life is in them, and why then will they not reflect upon themselves and say, *whither shall we go?* I would not tread out the least sparke except it be wild-fire in the house-eaves which may set the whole Town afire: God hath his babes, to whom I would recommend for their comfort the comparing of *Heb.* 5. 13. with *Heb.* 6. 9. where the Apostle having called them babes that had need to be taught the first principles, doth yet say, we are perswaded of you things that accompany salvation, and makes mention of their work and labour of love, for there may be much godlinesse in lesser light: Fundamentals unto salvation are not so many or burdensome, the least Star in the orbe hath as swift and regular a motion though not so much light, as the greater; only let it be your endeavour to know your own measure, and to encrease in grace and in the knowledge of

Rom. 12. 3.
2 Pet. 3. ult.

Jesus

Jesus Christ which are practicall things, and not to be question-sick, and leave wholesome food to long after such things as do but adde to the crudity of your stomacks, and fill you up with wind. 1 Tim. 6 4. νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις.

2. In respect of their ungroundednesse in knowledge, which lies loose in them and doth not stake them down, or anchor them from being tossed, because they have it by rote, and can neither give a reason of that they know, nor have found the weight of it upon judgement and conscience, and so they are variable and unstable like children, the Philosophers definition of a *moist element* is proper to them: That is (saith he) it hath no form or consistence of its own, but easily takes such figure as the continent or vessel in which it is doth give it, as water takes the form of the dish or glasse, &c. into which you put it, such are these; they have no mould but what the next teacher casts them into, being blown like glasses into this or that shape at the pleasure of his breath; to such as these I commend this, to get the reason of that they know, as its said, *a reason of the hope that is in you*, for Religion consists not in a rhapsody of loose opinions, nor will a little knowledge gotten by rote preserve a man from being taken captive by every novell doctrine. Its the Apostles phrase, 2. *Tim.* 3. 6. *They take prisoners silly women.* Where you may note, that he saith they prevail with women; they get an *Eudoxia*, *Iustina*, *Constantia*, on their side, and so work upon *Adam* by *Eve*. Quod difficulter suis, facilè alienis terminis continetur. διχμαλωτίζοντες τα γυναικεια. Omnes hæreses ex gynecaïs Axiomat. Ecclesiastica, pag. 74.

2. These children are tossed to and fro, and carried about, and that denotes;

1. That they are unstable under the command

of every wind, and a prey to every net that is spread for them, travelling and wandring through all opinions when they have left the true line; sometimes they are in *Cancer*, sometimes in *Capricorne*, falling even into contraries, for one errour is still a bridge to another; so we know that the Arminian went forward to Popery, and many of ours from Antinomianisme to Anabaptisme and Brownisme, and whether then? Why one errour ingendring with another begets a mule, or mixt off-spring, and so *Africk* it self shall not show more novelties, *they will encrease* (saith the Apostle 2 *Tim.* 2. 16.) *to more ungodlines*. Errour is a precipice, a *vortex* or whirlepool, which first turnes men round and then sucks them in: *be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines*, Heb. 13. 9. *for its good that the heart be* ballast or *stablisht with grace*, where the opposition is evident between being carried about and being establisht by grace.

2. That they are unprofitably carried; for to what port is the wave tossed? To what station is the cloud carried? Is not the wave bandied back again by the racket of the next wave, and the cloud by the next wind: Its good (saith he) that the heart be establisht, and to that end, that we converse in such doctrines *as doe profit them that are exercised in them*, still asking our selves this question, what improvement is there of my soul heavenward by such or such doctrine? What healing of the gashes of conscience? What further inlet or admission into communion with Christ? What cleansing from al filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of

Heb. 13. 9. οἱ περιπατήσαντες.

of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. If this be your aime, then steer this point, intend this scope, and let go questions and jinglings, contending towards the *end of the commandement*, *which mark* (saith the Apostle) *may never shoot at*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 6. in their ministery or doctrine, nor indeed do many hearers aime at any such thing, I mean our Nomades (as I may call them) or *walkers*, who will not endure to sit at the feet of a constant godly ministery (which yet is the best way of proficiency in knowledge and godlinesse) but by reason of their feverish thirst, as they distast each one, so they desire to tast all waters; of which sort is he that wanders away the Sabbath by peeping in at Church-dores, and taking essay of a sentence or two, and then, if there be no *scratch* for his *sich, lambit & fugit*, he is gone. ἀστοχήσαντες 1 Tim. 1. 6.

3. These children are tossed to and fro and carried about *by doctrine*, and that implies, that they are hearers that are thus unsetled, and they are teachers by whom they are unsetled.

1. They are hearers, and must not they be hearers? What else, condemned be the atheisme of the care of them who turn away their ear from God, who speakes by the hand of his messengers; let us leave to the Papists *ministorum multa officia, populi caeca obsequia*, the dumb offices of the Priests, and blind obedience of the people, when Scribes and Pharisees hold the chair, our Saviour saith not, hear not, *but take heed how you hear. Take heed what ye hear, beware of their leaven.* Mark. 4. 24. Luk. 8. 18.

2. They are teachers that unsettle these hearers. They have troubled you with words subverting your

soules, *Acts* 15. 24. It much concerns the Church, yea and the State into what hands doctrine is committed, by reason of the unsettlement of the people which may be occasioned thereby, I should beseech them that are in the office of teachers, that they would *take heed to themselves and to the doctrine*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 16. and that they would teach milk or meat, and not wind, nor lead on people first into cirtticismes, before they have laid in them the plain Grammar rule of sound and wholesome words, that they may be made proselites to Iesus Christ, not to an opinion; yea, though you may beare the name of a party as *Paul* might have done at *Corinth*, yet to cry them down who would cry you up, and put over your Disciples to Christ as *John* did, telling them that say I am of *Paul*, & I of *Apollo*, that they are carnall; and so you will wean them unto Christ whose they are; As for others that teach indeed but yet are no teachers, (for whatsoever they do by gifts, yet themselves are not the gifts of Christ unto men in the sence of the 11th verse of this chapter) I should desire to know whether every one that hath a gift to be a servant must therefore be a steward, or that hath gifts enabling him to deliver a message, must therefore be an Embassadour; If in truth you be as *Amos* said of himself, Herdesmen or gatherers of Sycomore fruit, then you must produce your extraordinary commission as he did, saying, *And the Lord took me as I followed the flock and said, go propheſie to my people Israel*, or else you must be taken to be but Herdsmen still, and so it will be no wonder that strange teachers should carry credulous

1 Cor. 3. 4.

Amos 7. 14, 15.

people

people about with *strange doctrines*, as the Apostle cals them, *Heb.* 13. 9.

4. The doctrine by which these children are tossed to and fro, and carried about, is called *wind*, and that doth not denote the pure Word of God, but some illegitimate doctrine which the adulterers and ravishers of the truth do beget upon it: what heresie ever came abroad without *verbum Domini* in the mouth of it. The Arrian pleaded out of that text *John* 14. 28. *The Father is greater then I.* The Anabaptist from that, *Matth.* 28. 19. *Go ye therefore and disciple all nations*, and when he shall be thriven to his ἀνὴρ or full stature he will undermine Magistracy by that *Rom.* 12. 19. *Avenge not your selves.* The Antinomian hath for his plea that 1 *Tim.* 1. 9. *The law is not made for a righteous man*, arguing that he who hath Evangelicall grace for his principle of obedience should not have the law for a rule thereof, as if a new principle and an old rule might not stand together: but because I intend not a particular confutation of these or the like errours, therefore finally, you all know that the devill hath a *scriptum est* ready, *Matth.* 3. 6. the Spider sucks poyson out of the Rose, not that I would imply that there is any such thing in the Word it self (for *ex veris nil nisi verum*) but that a corrupt stomack concocts wholesome food into disease.

And why *wind of doctrine?*

1. Because there is no solidity in it, but being wind it breeds but wind in the hearer and not good bloud, and here I cannot but bewail our Pulpits of late times, filled with hay and stubble in stead of

gold and silver; as namely, invectives against Bishops, and Cavaliers, news, and novel opinions, and in the mean time the staple commodities of Heaven, as Christ, Faith, Love, &c. are laid aside like breath'd ware which no body cals for; I would not be thought to be a patron of any such obnoxious persons against whom the Word of God shoots an arrow; but this I plead for, that people who come to look for soul-nourishing food may not be served with scum and froth.

2. Because of the changeableness, variety and novelty of it; for indeed such teachers do fit their lettice to the lips of their auditory, and do easily take them by their itching eares; nothing more pleasing to an Athenian eare then novelty, which affects the hearers while it is fresh and green, but when they shall come to chew this wind, they find nothing in it, and so they hunt about again until they start a new notion. Christ is the onely everlasting meat, who though he be like a great standing *dish*, which by reason of Kickshawes and fine Sallets is now adayes not much fed upon by many; yet a truly humble soul is never weary of Christ, neither can sit down to a meal, I mean, hear a Sermon without him, and this sound appetite is a signe of an excellent temperament and healthfull constitution of spirit; he that hath his mouth in tast for such doctrine, and his stomack craving such solid food, hath cause to blesse God, who it may be by inward shakings and temptations cals him to the setling of the main free-hold, and state of his soul, and so takes him off from running himself out of breath after

novelties

novelties and niceties, which will sooner fill his head with dreames then his heart with strength or comfort.

3. Because of its prevalencie with and over unstayed men, one would wonder that this which the Apostle cals wind of doctrine should so prevail and spread; how suddenly is a whole countrey leaven'd with it? Whereas the saving knowledge and reception of Christ, the power of godlinesse, and self-deniall may be preacht an age, and not so many fish be taken as are taken at one draught by a corrupt doctrine; I will not borrow that comparison which *Eusebius* made choice of to expresse the quick spreading of the Gospell at the first, saying, that it passed through the world like a Sun-beam; but I shall take that of the Apostle 2 *Tim.* 2.17. *Their word eateth like a gangrene*, which presently over-runs the parts and takes the brain, as this wind of doctrine doth, and the same Apostle (then whom no man did more counter-work false teachers) saith, *Acts* 20.30. *they shall speak perverse things, to draw disciples after them*, whereby it seemes that the way to draw disciples is to speake perverse things; hereunto agreeing is that of our Saviour, *Joh.* 5. 43. *I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not: If another shall come in his own name, him will ye receive.* Christ cannot finde entertaiment but *Bacchochebas* is followed, and the reason is, because Truth when it commeth hath nothing in us, but errour hath, There is no tinder to catch a sparke of truth, but there is oyl for the wild-fire of errour. Heresies are works of the flesh,

ἀθρόως ὅτα τὶς ἡλίου βολὴ, *Euseb. hist. lib.2.cap.3.*

Gal.

Gal. 5, 19, 20. therefore men are *ſoon removed*, *Gal.* 1. 6. from truth to errour.

And now to draw up this point into a ſum, by way of Application:

1. Conſider the doctrine you hear, and tell it over again from the hand of the teacher, a man will tell money after his father. *Beware leſt any man make prize of you*, *Col.* 2. 8. ſome there are to whom the reputation and worth of the teacher is the proof of his doctrine, receiving all that is ſtamped with his *ipſe dixit*. *We ſhould not call any man our father on earth*, *Matt.* 23. 9. and ſome alſo think it enough to ſay, *This doctrine makes moſt againſt ſuperſtition and popery*, and yet we will not abide that in a *Maldonat*, who ſhal rather pitch upon ſuch a ſenſe of Scripture, becauſe it makes moſt againſt the *Calviniſts*, and there are who falling upon ſome novell opinion do honeſtate it with the name of a *new light*, and conceive themſelves the greateſt illuminates, as having two eyes and all the world beſides but one, I deny it not, but that every man in his Regeneration hath a new light, which is a part of the new creature; for the new creation begins in a *fiat lux*; Nor do I deny but that in the Church there may be a clearer and further demonſtration of, and inſight into many things in the Scriptures, which have lien in the bottom of the pit, and may be brought neerer day then aforetime, for the neerer to the end the more glory and light, as its ſaid *Dan.* 12. 4. *Shut up the words, and ſeal the book, even to the time of the end: many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed.* But this light though new to us, yet it is not new to the word,

to

to the Sun light is not new, though it be to the Moon, as the Apostle cals *strange doctrines*, *Heb.* 13. 9. not such as are new to us, but such as are forrein to the word: so we call that strange light, rather then new, which the word of God owns not, as the offspring thereof, and therefore I exhort you to consider:

1. Whether this light come from the Word, or rather do not shine from a glo-worm in your own fancies? Is not this vision of yours *extra mittendo*, by beames going out of your own eyes to the object? do you not first conceive, and then go forth to seek a father for your child? as the Sadduces that first denie the Resurrection, and then think that they can make their heresie good, out of a case in *Moses* Law, *Matth.* 22. 24.

2. Whether it do nourish those graces in you in which the Kingdom of God consists? Or whether doth not this new light starve you? Doth not this sun-shine put out your fire? For whether it be that the intention of the mind upon the vain theory of opinions doth divert the stream, and leaves (as I may say) practick godlinesse dry; or whether God withdraw his influences from them that lay themselves out in toyes? or whatsoever the cause be, experience sheweth that after this *vertigo* takes men in the head, many of them decay in the vitals of Religion, and turn either Polititians to erect a party, or grow very lean in practicke godlinesse, and draw loose in their geeres, if indeed they become not loose in their lives and wayes.

2. This point may give us just occasion to in-

quire into the reason why we are so tossed to and fro and carried about, and crumbled into divisions, for who is a stranger in Israel that he should not know these things. The heavens are filled with fixed stars without number, but the Planets are no more then seven; if the proportion was cast up amongst us, our ἀστέρες πλανῆται, as *Jude* cals them *ver.* 13. do hold a greater proportion to our fixed starres. Is not our Church called to the barre to answer not so much for her purity or chastitie in all Administrations as for her very being and life? What children are these, that will unmother her, before God her husband have divorced and unwifed her? That will throw Babylon in her face, and then justifie their secession and departure by *Flee out of Babylon*: which will not serve their turn except they can find also a *Go out of Ephesus, out af Pergamus, out of Sardis, out of Laodicea*, &c.

Our Sacraments are also called to the barre. The Lords Supper, under the reason of a *mixt Communion*, by which (as I conceive) is not meant that unbeleevers or unregenerate persons do partake *rem sacramenti* the kernell of this ordinance; for in that respect they have no Communion with the faithfull: but that the Company of Communicants in the outward seal is mixt of regenerate and unregenerate, Saints and hypocrites; unto which we say, that though the door ought to be more narrow than to let in *dogs and swine*, yet the presence and profession of intruders doth not evacuate that Communion which the faithfull have with Christ, and among themselves: for the Master of the great Feast (as

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He observed,) *Matth.* 22, 12. doth not say to them that hath the wedding garment; how came you in hither with such a man; but *Friend, how canest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?*

Our Baptisme is said to be a vanity, a nullity, as being dispensed to infants, and that because we want example for it: but so we do, for womens receiving the Lords Supper: and if the reason and equity of the rule will carry it for woman as well as men, then also we shall joyn issue in that point, and make it good upon that ground, for children of beleeving parents as for the parents themselves: for are not such infants *fœderati*, confederates and in the Covenant, though they cannot actually restipulate, yea surely, as well as those which were circumcised.

See a learned Treatise called *The Birth priviledge.*

The morall Law is questioned, whether it be obligatory to and directory of a beleever in Christ; for because he hath another bridle of restraint of him from sin, and another spurre incentive of him unto obedience, therefore he hath not the same rule: which is but a confounding of the principle whereby, and of the rule according to which a Christian is acted; these men are much mistaken in that place whereupon they seem to ground their opinion, Rom. 7. 6. *That we should serve in newnesse of spirit, and not in the oldnesse of the letter.* Where they oppose these two as a rule and principle, taking away the rule, called (say they) the oldnesse of the letter, by the principle which is the newnesse of the Spirit; now there is nothing more cleer, then that the Apostle, oppose not the rule, to the principle of obedience; but *duo principia*, or rather *duos serviendi modos*,

modos, two manners of serving, in the one of which they were bond-men, in the other free men.

Our Ministery is arraigned also, as the Papists, because the Ministers of many Reformed Churches have not Imposition of the hands of a Bishop, deny their ordination to be legitimate, so is ours denied, because we had; We are between two millstones, what Ministers will they find in the Churches of Christ for many hundred yeares if this be good against ordination? I cannot conceive but God owned some of them, for his witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, *Rev.* 11. 3.

And finally to the nullity of these; the Church, the Sacraments, the Morall Law, the Ministery, is added, the *Mortality of the soul*, which if reason cannot confute, let a man consult conscience, if that cannot, Scripture will; had it not been a strange mistake in our blessed Saviour to have (but in a Parable) supposed a rich man after his death in torment and *Lazarus* in *Abrahams* bosome; if the soul bee not immortall, or at least if it survive not; for that cannot be applied to the resurrection, when the rich man will have no brethren on earth to send unto, neither can there be any sence in that portion of Scripture, but upon supposal of the soul outliving the body.

I had rather draw a curtain before this face of things then paint it out unto you. How sad a hearing is it to hear I am of *Paul*, I am of *Apollo*, I am of *Cephas*? was not this that which (as *Jerome* observes) did at first set up Bishops? our divisions are their factours, but that is not all; more sad it is to hear,

hear, *here is Christ, and there is Christ*, for we are so impotent in our opinions, that every man makes his own to be the very Shibboleth of the Church; a thing unheard of before our times, that men of divers Trades in this Famous City, can be all of one Company, but being of divers opinions they cannot be of one Church, nor wil be all of one School, except they be all of one form, which breakes our communion into fragments; Now what may be the cause of this transportation of people? are they children ungrounded in knowledge? That is too much to be feared, or are they proud and wanton, and have taken surfet of the great things of the Law? Or are they ashamed to stand in the levell of sober practicall Christians, but must be masters and set up the trade of some new opinion for themselves, and build *Babel* to get a name, and to be some body in the eyes of a party? I know not what to say, but the Lord stop the gangrene, and turn all our eyes to the great things of the Law, that so this tithing of mint and cummin may be left to a second place.

3. Be not children, and oh that this word might stop the fury of your precipitate levity, as *Cæsar* did the sedition of his Army by one word, *Quirites*; you have had the vitals of Religion, a holy and pure doctrine, and there is not another Gospell. For Ministers that have burn'd and shined themselves out in holding forth essentials and saving truths, the whole world since the Apostles time could not overmatch you; and for Christians (the seale of their Ministery) begotten and bred up under their shadow, in respect of the power of godli-

neſſe there hath not been another *England* on earth, ſince that time; I do not aſcribe this to the government and diſcipline (no more then I do aſcribe the multiplying of *Iſrael* to *Pharaoh*) but under God to the paines and diligence of faithfull paſtours, whom I would not have any man now to undervalue and debaſe as brats of Antichriſt: they were *Heroes* and Worthies, our regeneration and faith are their monuments, let no man dig up their aſhes and degrade them in eſteem, nor belch out poiſon againſt the learning, livings, callings of their godly ſucceſſors in this Church: for wiſe men will interpret that they do it upon no other reaſon then *Herod* burnt the Regiſtries of the families and genealogies of the *Iews*, in conſciouſneſſe of his own obſcurity; And as for this Church, certainly ſhe hath had a womb to bear children, and breaſts to give them ſuck, which two things do make a fair proof for her againſt all calumnies, though alas ſhe had alſo a generation of vipers eating through her bowels. Finally, This Kingdom owes as much to Religion as any in the world, we have ſeen wonders of Gods love and miracles of deliverance, and if God ſhall now bring his Ark to *Jeruſalem*, and ſet it up in greater ſtate then before time, let us dance before it, but withall let us not deſpiſe the houſe of *Obed-Edom* which God bleſſed for the Ark ſake; wee muſt not put down the Temple becauſe its made a den of theeves, but rather whip them out of it: and for that we faſt and pray, as alſo that thoſe ſeven *Ones* in the fourth and fifth verſes may continue with us for ever, *One body, and one ſpirit, one hope of*

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your calling, one Lord, one Faith, one baptisme, one God and Father of all, which should be as so many quoines to lock together all parts of the building into one, as indeed they would if men were not so opinion-big as to make every extravagant or at least extrinsicall opinion fundamental, and as an *Atlas* to a new-Church building.

I come now to the second part of the Text, which is the character or description of the impostors and seducers, that do unsettle men, whereof I shall open the termes or words.

1. *Sleight of men.* The originall word for sleight, doth properly signifie Dice-playing, and by a metaphor taken from players at Dice (which sort of men you shall seldom reade of in sober authours without some brand of infamie,) it sets out the qualitie of false teachers, and in this all agree, but then in the very point of application of this similitude there is a little difference.

1. As the cast of the Die is changeable and variable, *alea nihil incertius*, so are these teachers and such is their doctrine, and therefore he calls it *sleight of men*, opposing this doctrine of theirs to that of Gods pure word, which is alwayes like it self and hath no interests, passions, crooked ends, as men have. ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

2. As dice-players can cogge the Die and make it answer what cast they please, so these teachers have an act of mixing and adulterating the word, so as to make it answer their own profit or advantage, but whether it be so or so, or both wayes, you see what these teachers make of their hearers, meer table-

men

men, which the dice-player carries hither and thither, and moves from point to point as he pleases.

ἐν πανουργίᾳ. 3. *Cunning craftinesse*, The same word that is used to expresse the subtilty of the serpent tempting *Eve*, 2 Cor. 11. 3. *He beguiled Eve through his subtilty*, and it signifies the deep policie of men, 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. He taketh the wise in their own craftinesse and so it imports that these teachers are veterators, beaten fellowes, men exercised and skilfull to deceive.

πρὸς τὴν μεθοδείαν τῆς πλάνης. 4. *They lye in wait to deceive*, And the word in this Text is also used. *Ephes.* 6. 11. that ye may be able (saith he) to stand πρὸς τὰς μεθοδείας against the stratagems of the Devill; for it signifies properly an ambushment or stratagem of warre, whereby the enemy sets upon a man *ex insidiis*, at unawares, denoting the specious and faire overtures and pretences of false teachers, spreading their net under the chaffe, to catch the silly bird, for it is plain that all their sleight and craftinesse is πρὸς μεθοδείαν τῆς πλάνης, to this very end and purpose, that they may entrap and catch men within the ambush of their impostures.

Doct. 1. That which I collect from this part of the Text, is, What oddes the Apostle makes between the seducer and the seduced, even as much as between an old fowler and a young bird, the one he calls *children*, simple, easie, credulous people, the other is a shrewd gamester, a man of subtilty and stratagems. I cannot therefore but upon this observation, exhort you to take heed of playing with such, stake down nothing, especially not your soules, come not within

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their ambush. I wonder that petties and novices in knowledge will forsake the Congregations and open assemblies of Gods people, to frequent private houses where these teachers lay their ambuscado; would not all men condemn the folly of a young man of great estate, that should deal with a crafty gamester? For these seducers whose design is to make merchandise of their hearers, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. do most of all aime at them who are good prize, they care not much for a sheep that hath not a good fleece. I beseech you be wise, you may be caught though you mean it not, God may give you up captive to error for your vanity in forsaking his assemblies: Haply you resolve that you will not be caught: no more did *Dinah* intend to be defiled when she went forth to see the daughters of the Land, or *Peter* to deny Christ when he went to the high Priests hall; there is no man but will beleeve all's when God gives him up to delusion, one may be infected with the plague by looking in at the window, our nature is apt to receive impressions of error. Its observed of sheep, that they eat no grasse more greedily then that which rots them, *wherefore if they shall say unto you behold he is in the desart, go not forth, behold he is in the secret chambers, beleeve it not,* *Matth.* 24. 26 And what may some say, would you have us come up to an Idols Temple and communicate in Idolatry? No, *Come not ye to* Gilgal, *nor go up to* Bethaven, *Hosea* 4. 15. Woods and caves, and the Ile of *Pathmos* are to be preferred to such assemblies, or should Christians abstain all private meetings, and confine their Religion as many do to a

Church and a Common-Prayer Book? Far be it from us: Antichrist and Popery will feel the wounds of such private Assemblies as long as they draw any breath, the enemies of God and his Church know what reason they have to hate conventicles (as they call them:) All that I have to say is, that you stick fast unto and make use of your pastours and teachers, which are the gifts of Jesus Christ unto his Church, *ver.* 11. and that you come not into the secret of these who are described *ver.* 14. by their sleight and subtilty to deceive.

Part. 2. Seducers are Artists and Craftest masters in sleight and subtilty and stratagems of deceit, they have artifices, and wayes, and methods to take men at unawares, and to convey their poison privily: *who privily shall bring in damnable heresies*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. they will not resist the truth *aperto marte*, but cunningly undermine it, *as* Jannes *and* Jambres *withstood* Moses, *so do these also resist the truth*, 2 Tim. 3. 8. that is by sleight, and counterfeiting to do the same thing, so that one shall have much adoe to distinguish between the Serpents of *Moses* and them of the Magicians, *for they also did the like by their inchantments*, *Exod.* 7. 11. It seemes these seducers are men of parts, the Apostle describes them in the same words as the old Serpent is described by whose subtilty we exchanged Paradise for thistles and bryers; which first example should teach us for ever to take heed of them, that are of his breed, *who was more subtill then any beast of the field*; that which being sanctified or well imployed, might be called wisdom, being corrupted and abused is called craftinesse, therefore

πανουργία,

πανουργία, though usually taken in the worser part, for subtilty and cunning, yet sometimes it signifies wisedom and lawfull policie, there is καλὴ καὶ ἀγαθὴ πανουργία, a good and honest craftinesse or policie, whereby a Minister being a fisher of men, may catch such as by indiscretion will otherwise be hardned, scandalized and lost both to himself and God: we are in great want of this policie of discretion in the management of our Ministery, by breaking old bottles with new wine, and by exposing Religion to contempt of them whom we might have either convinced or at least disarmed of occasion against the truth; but no farther upon this point: I must remember that I am upon the subtilty and stratagems of impostours that lie in wait to seduce, some of which I shall point out unto you, as I find them in the Scriptures, that so you may perform that duty which is more then once enjoyned upon you in this case, that is *beware*. *Drusius* in Job cap. 5. ver. 13.

The common design of all false teachers, is to *make merchandise* of people, 2 *Pet.* 2.3. they negotiate their own ends, and have an eye to the stake when they cast the die their credit, profit, lusts are the center to which they draw every line, *they have eyes full of adultery, and their heart is exercised in covetousnesse, they follow the way of* Balaam *who loved the wages of unrighteousnesse*, 2 *Pet*, 2. 14, 15. and the Apostle beseeches the brethren to *mark such which cause divisions and offences, because they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly*, Rom. 16.18. but how doth the Apostle know this? For mens ends lie close; and how is it that he seemes to charge it

upon all of them? Are they all covetous? Have all of them eyes full of adultery? Do they all make their belly their God, *&c.*? Its true, that ends lie close, a man may deny one and seek another, *Simon Magus* laies by his great repute gotten by sorcery, to seek himself in getting power by laying on of hands to give the holy Ghost, and this he carried so cunningly as to passe with *Philip* undiscovered; pride may be trampled upon in pride, and books written against vain-glory only to get glory, bye ends may be preacht against, even out of bye ends; as all that bowl at the same marke doe not take the same ground, so men in seeking themselves, may drive severall trades; one is for credit, another for his palat, another for his purse, *&c.* but this in the general wil hold good, *seducers are self seekers*. For the service of this main designe these and such like are their arts or method.

1. The Apostle tells us, that *by good words and faire speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple*, Rom. 16. 18. the word he useth for simple, is τῶν ἀκάκων, men that are otherwise not evil, or as we vulgarly call them, harmlesse, innocent men, easie to be led [illegible]: It should seem the Corinthian teachers, with whom *Paul* had such bickerings, had a faculty of pithanology or perswasive lenociny of words, whereby they did *suadendo docere*, not so much convince by evidence of truth as perswade with woing words; It concernes very much *to hold fast the form of wholesome words*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. which the Apostle oppoteth to *questions and logomachies or strife of words and perverse disputings*, 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

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as also to prophane and vain bablings, 2 Tim. 2. 16. and 1 *Tim*, 6. 20, that is κενοφωνιας, or as some read καινοφωνιας, empty words, and novell expressions: you all know that by losing the genuine and proper meaning of the word Church and Bishop, *&c.* we had almost forgot the Scripture use of them, and brought the Church within the pale of the Clergy, and the Bishop into a throne above the Ministers of the word; The Apostle *Peter* speaking of false teachers, hath an expression or two to this purpose, *They speak great swelling words of vanity*, 2 Pet. 2.18. that is, they speak great bubbles of words full of wind, strong lines, or bigge fancies to bear down people by that torrent: and again in the 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *through covetousnesse shall they with fained words make merchandise of you.* What are these fained words? do not they mean the same as that 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. *speaking lies in hypocrisie*, or should it not rather be taken for a set and composed form of words, such as Merchants use in commending their wares to sale: shewing the goodnesse and properties of the commodity they desire to put off, and even belying it into credit, for to that the words seem to allude: I shall not dwell upon this, but certainly it is not for nothing that seducers are found to hide their hook under words and expressions, which they do artificially fit and compose for the purpose: a good Title sells a sorry Book; And all times will bear witnesse that it hath been the property of such men as have had any monster to bring to light, to use obscurity and cloudinesse of expression, that what is unshapen and without form at the first, may after-

Plerunque illa duo cohærent mutatio doctrinæ & novi modi loquendi. Chem. loc. com.

πλασοῖς λογοις.

wards be lickt into porportion: errors are bashfull at first, and comming out of the darke cannot look broad-waken upon the light, and therefore they are by their parents or nurses alwayes swathed up in clouts of ambiguity, as the Oracles of old lapt up their *Effata*, or as he that wrote *Edvardum regem occidere nolite timere bonum est*, where the comma helps him out at which door he pleases: thus the *sepia* goes away in her own ink, and the door is left half chare to make escape.

2. They baite their hook with such baites as are proper to the fish they would catch: Els they were not good anglers, to which the Apostle seemes to compare them, in that word δελεάζοντες, 2 *Pet.* 2. 18. which is to allure as a bait doth the fish. And what is that bait? See ver. 19. *they promise them liberty*, there is not a more catching bait then *liberty*: Is it likely that Jesus Christ or his Ministers that preach a yoke, a daily crosse, a forsaking all for him, should make such great draughts of fish, as they that *promise liberty*? But what liberty, haply they may call it Christian liberty, or liberty of conscience, so the serpent said, *ye shall be as gods*, but what is it indeed: Is it not a liberty from the control or check of superiours and their authority, for *they despise dominion and speak evil of dignities*, Iude 8. and therefore doth the Apostle *Paul* so much call for obedience and subjection to Magistrates, Masters, Ministers, thereby anticipating or correcting the thoughts of Libertinisme, unto which the name of *Gospel liberty* might be abused: Surely our Lord Christ hath not brought in a *Saturnalia* or exemption of Christians from

2 Pet. 2. 10.

from the Scepter of Government, or the rod of Discipline. Nor is liberty of conſcience (though ſacred and inviolable) a freedom to be or do what we will: for by that engine the ſword might be eaſily wiped out of the Magiſtrates, and the Keyes out of the Churches hand; and then we ſhould find our ſelves returned to a Chaos without form and void; I do not wonder that all ſorts of ſects and hereſies (though they be of contrary principles in particular) ſhould meet and concurre in this *ἀυτονομία*, or liberty to live by their own lawes, unaccountable to others, and independent; Thoſe that are commonly called Independents are far off from making the Church to be ſuch a *Romulus* his *aſylum*, a Sanctuary for all commers; they allow that Jeruſalem ſhall reach forth her hand as far as Antioch; neither (I think) do they plead the letting alone of the tares untill the harveſt, *Matth.* 13. 30. againſt the cenſures of the Church or the *faces & ſecurim* of the Magiſtrate; but I am ſure of this, that he that ſaith, *Let both grow together until the harveſt*; doth not give way to any man to ſow them. *An enemy hath done this*: but enough of this at this time. There are others that go about with liberty too, and cry, a liberty from the obligation of the Morall Law as a rule; a liberty from pœnitential ſorrows, faſtings, humiliations to them that are regenerate; a liberty from ſinning, or if not ſo, yet from asking pardon for it, if they be in Chriſt. Theſe are great liberties indeed, but they are glorious liberties, reſerved unto another world, if any man promiſe you them here on earth, he takes upon him to antedate the time of them.

them. There are certain fruits and effects of Christs Redemption of us, which are payable only in the world to come; There is yet another liberty which some will promise, and that is a liberty of sensual lusts, and fleshly loosnesse. It was *Balaams* bait whereby he invited the Israelites to the idolatry of *Baal-peor*, and the Apostle finds these false teachers baiting their hook with the same, 2 *Pet.* 2. 18. *They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonnesse*: and *ver.* 14. *Having eyes full of adulteries, or of an adultereſſe*, as the originall carries it; and again, *ver.* 2. *many shall follow their lascivious wayes*: for some copies have ἀσελγείαις. But you will say, Is there any such affinity between seducing by doctrine and sensuality? How is it that the Apostle charges these teachers with such filthy lusts? I shall answer but little to this question, as God for idolatry, which is spiritual fornication, gives men and women up to that which is corporall: for its said *Rom.* 1. 25, 26. *They changed the truth of God into a lie: for this cause God gave them up to vile affections*, so will God shame and discredit the errours that are set up against his truth by the lusts that keep company with them.

3. They undervalue and cast dirt in the face of al that stand in their light, this is an old way of insinuating into people, the wolves perswade the sheep that their Shepherds feed them, to fleece them, that so they may the easilyer worry them: It is not much that we are called legall Preachers, time-servers, persecutours inquisitours, what not? The devill must first asperse God to *Eve* before he prevail with her, and those popular preachers could not

not reigne at Corinth but by bringing *Paul* into diſ-eſteem, if they could; *His letters, ſay they, are weighty and powerfull, but his bodily preſence is weak, and his ſpeech contemptible,* 2 *Cor.* 10. 10. Its eaſie for men to ingratiate themſelves with their party by eſpying faults in every Ordinance and Adminiſtration never ſo well conſtituted; we ſee beauty enough and find no want of light in the Sun, though they that look upon it through their Galilean glaſſes diſcover ſpots in it as big as all Aſia or Africk, as themſelves ſay.

They wreſt the Scriptures, 2 *Pet.* 2. 16. making it to ſpeak upon the rack that which it never meant; partiality and affection to their own opinion is an ill *medium* to look through: Pull the ſtaffe out of the water, and it will not be crooked; how often do men ἀγγαρεύειν τὰς γραφὰς compell the Scriptures to go two mile, when of themſelves they will go but one, we ſhould tremble to put words into the mouth of thoſe Oracles, which we do by miſ-inferences, and miſ-applications. 1. By miſ-inference drawing forth that which they will not yeeld, as the Sadduces proved no Reſurrection, becauſe ſeven brethren had taken one woman to wife, *Matth.* 22. 28. unto whom our Saviour anſwers, that though they cited a place of Scripture, yet they erred not knowing the Scripture; for not he that repeats the words, but takes up the true ſence, is the man that knows the Scriptures. We muſt not mangle and cut one joynt from another, and expound one ſentence againſt the whole ſtream. I would men would tremble to take Gods hand which he hath ſet to his own

Word, and set it to a lie of their own: it were odious to serve a man so. 2. By mis-application of general rules to particulars. For it hath been observed that it is a great cause of many evils not to be able to adapt common principles and generall rules to particular cases or actions; for how often is a general rule of Scripture brought for the warrant of an unlawfull action? As if the Apostle should have eaten with scandall, upon the rule of *All things are pure to the pure*; so we know, how men first imagined a decency and order in superstitious ceremonies, and then warranted them by that, *Let all things be done decently and in order*; we fear not to say, that no man can prove the calling of our Ministers, or the Baptisme of our infants, or the Morall Law to be null, &c. but by the torture of the Scriptures.

τὸ τᾶς προλήψεις τᾶς κοίνας μὴ σύνασθαι ἐφαρμόζειν τοῖς ἐπιμέρεσι. *Arrian. in epictet.*

5. They recommend their doctrine upon some private pretended revelation and light of their own, or by some effects thereof which they seeme to have found in themselves since they became therewith acquainted; as that they have found such experiments of it in themselves as they never had before, they are more lively, cheerfull, comfortable, &c. As for their revelations or light, what is it they mean by them? Doe they mean that the vaile is taken off the Scripture or rather their eye, so that they have a cleerer spirituall discerning into, and savour of, and affection to the Word? Or do they mean by revelation, some secret sealings or assurances which are indeed private to their own soules, like the white stone of absolution with their own names written thereon, These are admirable first-fruits of the

the Spirit and of glory; Happy are they to whom God in this wilderneſſe gives to taſte theſe Cluſters of Canaan-Grapes; And for the effects of the word which they find in themſelves, as atteſtations of the truth, power, and goodneſſe of the word. I find the Apoſtle appealing to the ſenſe of beleevers, to atteſt the doctrine of the Goſpel, *Gal.* 3.2. *received ye the Spirit by the preaching of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* But now what is all this to the revelation or effects of *new and ſtrange doctrines?* What impoſtures have not been obtruded upon pretence of private light and revelation, the old Prophet may bring you into the lions mouth by telling you of an angel that ſpoke to him, 1 *Kin.* 13.18. & 24. God ſaith that he *proves his people by a Prophet, or dreamer of dreames, to know whether they love the Lord their God, with all their heart, and with all their ſoul, Deut.* 13.3. nor Prophet, nor Apoſtle, nor Angel is to be heard if he preach παρὸ beſides or other then that ye have received, and for that they ſay that they find themſelves as it were in a new world ſince they found this new way. I much queſtion their *probatum eſt*, Is it not ſome angel of darkneſſe transformed into an Angel of light? Do they not walk in the light of their fire, and the ſparkes that they have kindled, *Iſai.* 50. 11. It muſt needs be an eaſie way; when a man hath caſt off all trouble for ſin and all care of holy duties: but ſurely the way is too broad to be good. Theſe principles, *I ought not to ſorrow for ſin, leaſt I diſparage the ſufficiencie of Chriſts ſatisfaction: I can pay no obedience to the law, but I muſt thereby either infringe my Chriſtian liberty, or oyn merit with Chriſt;* Gal. 1. 8.

must needs work a strange alteration, because the doctrine is strange.

I would speak a word from this point to Ministers, and to the people.

1. To the Ministers, you see these impostours have sleight and subtilty to lie in wait for the people; and whom doth it concern but you to take heed to the flock, you cannot by silence *liberare fidem aut animam*; Christ hath given Pastours and Teachers to his Church to this end, that the people should not be children, tossed to and fro, &c. convincing of gain-sayers, and stopping the mouths of soul-subverting teachers doth belong to your office, *Titus* 1. 9, 10, 11. if there were but one Heterodox teacher start up, and neglected by the people, you would discharge at him, with as much freedom as at Papists: what if there be moe such teachers and followed by thousands, is it ever the more truth for the number? Or is it a *noli me tangere*? Or are we slaves to popularity? And dare not snatch the souls of our people out of the stream for fear of displeasing them by saving of them? Or have we no hope to work a cure, and so like Phisitians, we let desperate patients eat and drink, and do what they will without contradiction? *Luther* did not much consider how usefull the Sectaries of his time might have been against the Pope and his party, but confuted them freely, knowing that they more blemisht and hindred the Reformation by their tenets, then were likely to help it with their hands: I would not blow the Trumpet, or proclaim open warre against lesser differences, severity and acrimony in such cases

cases breedes schisme and heales it not: but pernicious errours and destructive to souls: (which it is cruelty to spare and not pity) must be faced and fought against, not with invectives and railing, that doth but anger the Gangrene, and is not the way to quench wild-fire, but by solid convictions and evidence of truth: for so you shall either gain a brother, or not lose a friend. But you may ask, when should we go out against a doctrine as pernicious: for even that point about the law which denominates an *Antinomian*, and that about Baptisme which denominates an *Anabaptist*, seem not to be fatall to the soul? To this I answer, that we must look how a doctrine is attended or consequenced: the first circle in the water is the least, those that are caused by it are bigger and bigger, an opinion may be very ill as it is a bastard mis-begotten by mis-inferences from the Word: but it is worse as it is a whore and begets a new off-spring of errours more pernicious, but I must remember to whom I speak. Brethren, if the sheep be infected or worried, both God and men will ask, Where were the Shepherds? Or what did they in the mean time?

2. To the people I say but this, *Rom.* 16.17. *I beseech you brethren mark them which cause divisions and differences contrary to the doctrine which yee have learned, and avoid them*: The avoiding of such teachers is your proper duty, as you would avoid an ambuscado or stratagem of deceit: our present divisions are scandalous to your selves, to your Ministers, to the truth: for by reason of them, *The way of truth is evil spoken of*, 2 *Pet.* 2.2. they are the

hopes of the common enemy, and our own weaknings, and becauſe I have named the enemy, let no man think that the betraying of theſe differences among our ſelves doth give handle and occaſion to them, to traduce us all as Anabaptiſts, Browniſts, Sectaries: we need not fear the calumnies of thoſe to whom godlineſſe it ſelfe, as Chriſtianity of old, was crime enough, we ſhall doe our ſelves right in their eyes by diſclaiming them. The Apoſtles do boldly tax the diviſions among Chriſtians notwithſtanding any upbraiding of the Heathens. Let them ſay that we are about (inſtead of purging the Temple as Chriſt did) to ſet up a Pantheon (as the *Romans* did) or an Altar to the unknown god (as they of *Athens* did.) This water will not ſtick upon us long, they will be of another mind when we ſhall ſhake this viper off our hand: In the mean time I beſeech you to conſider whether beſide the ſleight and cunning craftineſſe of ſeducing teachers, there be not ſome other ſtratagems on foot, acted from behind the door and at a greater diſtance, ſome hand of *Joab* is in all this, the polititian and the Jeſuit blow theſe coales, they would make us as *Samaritans* and *Jews* to one another. Let us not gratifie our enemies. Ile ſay but this, obſerve the brand or character ſet upon the ſeduced, *Unſtable ſouls*, 2 Pet. 2. 14. *ſilly women laden with ſins, led away with divers luſts*, 2 Tim. 3. 6. &c. and upon the ſeducers, *merchants of mens ſouls*, 2 Pet. 2. 3. *unruly, vain-talkers, deceivers, aiming at filthy lucre*, Titus 1. 10. 11. ἄθεσμοι, lawleſſe perſons, 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. *men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 8. &c.

but

but admit there be a face and presence of holinesse in the person, may we not then more securely receive their doctrine? To this I answer, that both person and doctrine may carry a fair stamp and superscription. We do not weigh gold to try the superscription of it, but the weight. Guilded pills may convey poison. Satan in *Peter* is not easily discovered. The better Pass that error brings with it, the more dangerous it is.

So much upon the second part of the text. The third is the preservative or antidote against all impressions of such teachers as come with sleight and subtilty, *&c.* and that is two-fold. 1. The Ministery which Christ hath given to his Church, for this ver. relates to the 11. *He gave some Apostles, and some,* &c. *that henceforth,* &c. and to them doth the Apostle commit the charge of the flock, to watch over them against wolves, *Acts* 20.28,29. 2. The holding fast and pursuance of the substance and great things of Religion, ver. 15. *but being sincere in love grow up in all things into him which is the head:* Is an excellent growth, to grow up into the head, that is, into communion with and conformity to Jesus Christ, which trivial opinions nothing at all advance; observe the *antithesis* or opposition he makes between being carried about, *&c.* and following the truth in love, for *contraria, contrariis*, diseases are cured by contraries; so the Apostle *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3.17,18. gives the same receipt against unstedfastnesse, *but grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*; and to take off teachers from fables and genealogies, and questions of no value;

Paul

Paul commends to them the aiming at *godly edifying which is by faith*, and to hold to that which is *the end of the commandement, charity out of a pure heart and of a good conſcience and of faith unfained*, 1 Tim. 1. 4, 5. If both Miniſters and people would but drive this trade, it would take off that wandring and hunting after novell opinions and doctrines, and would keep us conſtant in the wholeſome paſtures, even now that the hedge of ſetled government is wanting; If you have good feeding, why ſhould not that keep you from wandering, untill the pale be ſet up, wait upon God in the uſe of his ſaving ordinances; and pray for us, If *Moſes* ſtay long in the mount, muſt the people be ſetting up golden calves, and ſay we know not what is become of this *Moſes*; *Aarons* rod ſhal ſwallow up all the rods of *Iannes* and *Iambres* in due time. The Apoſtle puts us in hope of a *nil ultra* to ſuch, 2 *Tim.* 3. 9. *They ſha'l proceed no further, for their folly ſhall be manifeſt unto all.*

Exod. 7. 12.

FINIS.